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An ANSWER

To Mr. Henry Payne's

LETTER,

Concerning His Majesty's

DECLARATION of INDULGENCE,

Writ to the *Author of the Letter to A Dissenter.*

MR. PAYNE,

Gilbert Burnet

**I** Cannot hold asking you; how much *Money* you had, from the *Writer of the Paper*, which you pretend to *Answer*: for as you have the character of a man that deals with both hands, so this is writ in such a manner as to make one think you were hired to it, by the Adverse Party: but it has been indeed so ordinary to your Friends, to write in this manner of late, that the Censures upon it are divided, both fall heavy: some suspect their Sincerity others accuse them for want of a right Understanding: for tho all are not of the pitch of the *Irish Priests* Reflections, on the Bp of Bath and Wells's Sermon, which was indeed *Irish* double refined; yet both in your Books of Controversy, and Policy, and even in your *Poems*, you seem to have entred into such an intermixture with the *Irish*, that the thread all over is *Linscy-woolsey*. You acknowledge that the Gentleman whom you answer has a *Polite Pen*, and that his *Letter is an Ingenious paper*, and made up of well-Composed Sentences and Periods. Yet I believe he will hardly return you your Complement. If it was well writ, your Party wants either Men or Judgment extremely, in allowing you this province of answering it. If the *Paper* did you some hurt, you had better have let the Town be a little pleased with it for a while; and have hoped that a little time or some new paper (tho one of its force is scarce to be expected) should have worn it out, then to give it a new luster by such an *Answer*.

The *Time of the Dissenters Sufferings*, which you lengthen out to 27 years, will hardly amount to seven. For the long Intervals it had, in the last *Reign*, are not forgot: and those who animated the latest and severest of their sufferings are such, that in good manners you ought not to reflect on their Conduct. *Opium* is as certain a poison, tho not so violent, as *Sublimate*; and if more corrosive Medicines did not work, the *Design* is the same, when soporiferous ones are used: since the Patient is to be killed both ways: and it seems that all that is in debate is, which is the safer: the accepting a present ease when the ill intent with which it is offered, is Visible, is just as wise an

action, as to take *Opium* to lay a small Distemper when one may conclude from the *dose*, that he will never come out of the Sleep. So that after all, it is plain on which side the *Madness* lies. The *Dissenters* for a little present ease, to be enjoyed at Mercy, must concur to break down all our hedges, and to lay us open to that Devouring Power, before which nothing can stand that will not *worship* it.

All that for which you reproach the *Church of England* amounts to this, that a few good words, could not persuade her to destroy her self; and to Sacrifice her *Religion* and the *Laws* to a party that never has done nor ever can do the *King* half the service that she has rendred him. There are some sorts of propositions that a man does not know how to answer: nor would he be thought Ingratefull who after he had received some Civilities from a person to whom he had done great service, could not be prevailed with by these so far as to spare him his Wife or his Daughter. It must argue a peculiar degree of confidence to ask things, that are above the being either askt or granted. Our *Religion* and our *Government* are matters that are not to be parted with to shew our good breeding: and of all men living you ought not to pretend to *Good Manners*, who talk as you do, of the *Oppression* of the last *Reign*. When the *King's* Obligations to his *Brother*, and the share that he had in his *Councils*, are considered; the reproaching his *Government*, has so ill a grace, that you are as Indecent in your Flatteries as Injurious in your Reflections. And by this gratitude of yours to the Memory of the late *King*, the *Church of England* may easily Infer, how long all her Services would be remembred, even if she had done all that was desired of her.

I would fain know which of the *Brethren of the Dissenters in forreigne Countries sought their Relief from Rebellion*. The *Germans* Reformed by the Authority of their *Princes*, so did the *Swedes*, the *Danes*, and like wise the *Swissers*. In *France* they maintained the *Princes of the Blood* against the *League*: and in *Holland* the *Quarrell* was for *Civil liberties*; *Protestant* and *Papist* concurring equally in it. You mention *Holland* as an Instance that *Liberty* and *Infallibility* can dwell together: since *Papists* there shew that they can be friendly neighbours, to those whom they think in the wrong: It is very like they would be still so in *England*, if they were under the lash of the law, and so were upon their good behaviour, the *Government* being still against them: and this has so good an effect in *Holland*, that I hope we shall never depart from the *Dutch* Pattern: some can be very Humble Servants that would prove Imperious Masters. You say that *Force* is our only *Supporter*: but tho there is no force of our side at present, it does not appear that we are in such a tottering condition, as if we had no *Supporter* left us. *God* and *Truth* are of our side: and the indiscreet use of *Force*, when set on by our Enemies, has rather undermined than supported us. But you have taken pains to make us grow wiser, and to let us see our Errors, which is perhaps the only obligation that we owe you; and we are so sensible of it, that without examining what your Intentions may have been in it, we heartily thank you for it.

I do not comprehend what your quarrell is at the *squinting Term* of the next heir, as you call it; tho I do not wonder that *squinting* comes in your mind whensoever you think of *HER*; for all people look *askew* at that which troubles them: and

her being the *next heir* is no less the *delight* of all good men, than it is your *affliction*: all the pains that you take to represent her dreadful to the *Dissenters*, must needs find that credit with them, that is due to the *Insinuations* of an *Enemy*. It is very true, that as she was bred up in our *Church*, she adheres to it so *Eminently*, as to make her to be now our *chief Ornament* as we hope she will be once our *main Defence*. If by the *strictest form* of our *Church* you mean an *Exemplary Piety*, and a *shining Conversation*, you have given her true *Character*: But your designe lies another way to make the *Dissenters* form strange Ideas of her, as if she thought all *Indulgence* to them *Criminal*: But as the *Gentleness* of her nature is such, that none but those who are so guilty, that all mercy to them would be a *Crime*, can apprehend anything that is terrible, from her, so as for the *Dissenters*, her going so constantly to the *Dutch* and *French Churches* shews, that she can very well endure their *Assemblies*, at the same time that she prefers, ours. She has also too often expressed her dislike at the heats that have been kept up among us concerning such *Inconsiderable Differences*, to pass for a *Bigot* or a *persecutor* in such matters: and She sees both the mischief that the *Protestant Religion* has received from their subdivisions, and the happiness of granting a *due Liberty of Conscience*, where she has so long lived, that there is no reason to make any fancy that she will either keep up our *Differences*, or bear down the *Dissenters* with *Rigor*. But because you hope for nothing from her own *Inclinations*, you would have her terrified with the *strong Argument of Numbers*, which you fancy will certainly *secure them from her recalling the favour*. But of what side soever that *Argument* may be *strong*, sure it is not of *theirs* who make but *one to Two hundred*: and I suppose you scarce expect that the *Dissenters* will rebel, that you may have your *Masses*, and how their numbers will *secure them*, unless it be by enabling them to *Rebell*, I cannot Imagine: this is indeed a *squinting* at the *Next Heir*, with a witness, when you would already muster up the *Troops* that must rise against her. But let me tell you, that you know both *Her Character* and the *Prince's* very ill that fancy, they are only to be wrought on by *Fear*. They are known to your great grief; to be above that: and it must be to their own *Mercifull Inclinations*, that you must owe all that you can expect under them, but neither to their *fear* nor to your own *Numbers*. As for the *hatred and Contempt*, even to the degree of being more *Ridiculous* than the *Mass* under which you say *Her way of Worship is in Holland*, this is one of those figures of speech that shew how exactly you have Studied the *Jesuites Moralls*. All that come from *Holland*, assure us, that she is so *Universally beloved and esteemed* there, that every thing that she does, is the better thought of even because she does it. Upon the whole matter, all that you say of the *Next Heir*, proves too truly that you are that for which you reproach the *Church of England*, a *Disciple of the Crown* only for the loaves, for if you had that respect which you pretend for the *King*, you would have shewed it more upon this occasion.

Nor am I so much in love with your *style*, as to imitate it, therefore I will not do you so great a pleasure, as to say the least thing that may reflect on that *Ambrosity*, which the *Church of England* has taught me to reverence even after all the *Disgraces* that

that she has received from it : and if she were not Insuperably restrained by her Principles, instead of the *Thin Mustel* with which you reproach her, she could soon make so *thick* a one as would make the *Thinness* of yours, very visible upon so unequall a division of the Nation : But she will neither be threatned nor laughed out of her Religion and her loyalty : tho such insultings as she meets with, that almost pass all humane Patience, would tempt men that had a less fixed principle of submission, to make their Enemies feel to their cost, that they owe all the Triumphs they make, more to *our Principles*, than to their own Force. Their laughing at *our Doctrine of non resistance*, lets us see, that it would be none of *theirs* under the *Next Heir*, at whom you *Squint*, if the *strong Argument of Numbers* made you not apprehend that *Two Hundred to one* would prove an Unequal Match.

As for your *Memorandums*, I shall answer them as short as you give them

1. It will be hard, to persuade people, that a Decision in favour of the *Dispensing Power*, flowing from *Judges* that are both made, and paid, and that may be removed at pleasure, will amount to the recognising of *that Right by law*.

2. It will be hard to persuade the world, that the *Kings* adhering to his *Promises*, and his *Coronation Oath*, and to the known *Laws* of the land, would make him *Felo de se*. The following of different methods were the likelier way to it, if it were not for the *Loyalty of the Church of England*.

3. It will be very easy to see the use of continuing the *Test by Law*; since all those that break thro it, as well as the *Judges*, who have authoris'd their Crimes, are still liable for all they do : and after all your *buffing*, with the *Dispensing Power*, we do not doubt but the apprehension of an after reckoning sticks deep somewhere, you say, *it may be supposed, that the aversion of a Protestant King to the Popish party, will sufficiently exclude them, even without the Test*. But it must be confessed, that you take all possible care, to confirm that *Aversion* so far, as to put it beyond a *it may be supposed*. And it seems you understand *Christs Prerogative*, as well as the *Judges* did the *Kings*, that fancy the *Test* is against it : it is so futeable to the nature of all *Governments*, to take Assurances of those who are admitted to Places of Trust, that you do very ill to appeal to an *Impartial consideration*, for you are sure to lose it there.

Few *English men*, will believe you in earnest when you seem zealous for publick liberty, or the *Magna Charta* : or that you are so very apprehensive of *Slavery* : And your Friends must have very much changed both their Natures and their Principles, if *their conduct does not give cause to renew the like Statutes against them*, even tho they should be repealed in this *Reign*, notwithstanding all your confidence to the contrary. I will still believe that the *strong Argument of Numbers* will be always the powerfulest of all others with you : which as long as it has its Force, and no longer, we may hope to be at quiet. I concur heartily with you in your Prayers for the *King*, tho perhaps I differ from you in my Notions, both of his *Glory* and of the *Felicity of his People* : and as for your own particular, I wish you would either not at all Employ your Pen, or learn to write to better purpose : but tho I cannot admire your Letter, yet I am

YOUR HUMBLE SERVANT

T. T.